The International Journal for

THE EDUCATION OF THE BLIND

The Official Publication of the
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF INSTRUCTORS OF THE BLIND
A Magazine for
Teachers and Parents of Visually Handicapped Children

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The International Journal for
THE EDUCATION OF THE BLIND, INC.

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THE EDUCATION OF THE BLIND, INC.

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THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR THE EDUCATION OF THE BLIND is a professional magazine of methods, techniques and research for teachers and parents of visually handicapped children and other workers in the field of the blind. This publication is incorporated under the laws of the State of New York and is copyrighted in the Copyright Office of The Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. The Journal is a medium for the free expression of the progress or the need for progress in the field of the blind. It is the intention of the editors to provide opportunity for the free exchange of ideas, suggestions, and achievements in the area of the education of visually handicapped children; to disseminate information and findings of research and experiment relative to the methods and techniques of teaching and training of blind children; to give recognition (through awards or otherwise) for outstanding contribution and service to the blind; and to report current activities in schools where children who are blind are educated. The editors hope that a greater national and international consciousness and understanding of the problems of the blind can be brought to the attention of the public through such a professional periodical, and in general stimulate interest and creative effort and encourage thoughtful and enlightened endeavor to achieve this end.

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THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR THE EDUCATION OF THE BLIND, INC.

New President and New Editor For "The Journal"

ALTON G. KLOSS, Ed.D.
President of the Board of Trustees

PAUL J. LANGAN
Editor (Resigned)

V. R. CARTER
Editor-in-Chief

New President and New Editor For "The Journal"

Editor's Note: At the meeting of the Board of Trustees of The International Journal for the Education of the Blind, Inc., at Worthington, Ohio, last June, Dr. Alton G. Kloss, Superintendent of the Western Pennsylvania School for Blind Children, Pittsburgh, was elected President of the Board, to succeed Mr. Paul J. Langan, resigned. Subsequently, because of his resignation as Superintendent of the Kentucky School for the Blind, Louisville, to become Field Service Counselor for the Far East with the American Foundation for Overseas Blind, New York, Mr. Langan also resigned as Editor of *The Journal*, effective October 15, 1956. At the meeting of the Board of Trustees, October 22, 1956, at Louisville, Kentucky, Mr. V. R. Carter, Superintendent of the Oklahoma School for the Blind, Muskogee, was elected Editor-in-Chief. Additionally, Miss Marjorie S. Hooper, Braille and Large Type Editor of the American Printing House for the Blind, Louisville, Kentucky, was made Managing Editor.

Mr. Langan's resignation was accepted with profound regret by *The Journal's* Board of Trustees. During his time as Editor, Mr. Langan rendered outstanding service to all of us who are interested in promoting the education and welfare of blind children. He served with energy, intelligence and "heart." Although all of us in the field regret his resignation as Editor, as well as his loss to the field of education of the blind in this country, we wish him every success in his work with the blind of Asia.

To Dr. Kloss and Mr. Carter, we extend a warm welcome as the presiding head and Editor, respectively, of our professional magazine. We look forward to increasing growth and stature for *The Journal* under their leadership.

Samuel C. Ashcroft
Marjorie S. Hooper
Associate Editors
(Acting Editors, December, 1956 issue)

About The Journal

By Alton G. Kloss, Ed.D., President
The International Journal for the Education of the Blind, Inc.

Immediately upon learning of Mr. Langan's resignation as Editor of *The Journal*, I, as your President, sought the advice of the members of *The Journal's* Board of Trustees in order to share their thinking as to how we might best proceed in order to assure continuity of publication. As a result of the ideas which they shared with me, the following steps were taken: (1) Mr. Samuel C. Ashcroft and Miss Marjorie S. Hooper, Associate Editors, were requested to assume the responsibility for the publication of the December issue, and (2) Mr. V. R. Carter, Superintendent of the Oklahoma School for the Blind, was elected by *The Journal's* Board

of Trustees as Mr. Langan's successor.

Mr. Carter has an established reputation as a capable leader in our field, and has recently completed a term of outstanding service as Chairman of the Publications Committee of the American Printing House for the Blind. Miss Marjorie S. Hooper, Braille and Large Type Editor of the Printing House, whose superior abilities are known to all of us, will work in cooperation with Mr. Carter in the capacity of Managing Editor, and will be in charge of production and circulation of *The Journal.* Messrs. Samuel C. Ashcroft and J. M. Woolly and Misses Marjorie S. Hooper and Dorothy Petrucci will serve as Associate Editors. Miss Lois V. Cox and Messrs. Joseph J. Kerr, Alton G. Kloss, Paul C. Mitchell, Donald W. Overbeay, and Egbert N. Peeler will serve as Assistant Editors.

The Journal will be issued at least four times this year, and an earnest attempt will be made to publish six issues, if a sufficient number of worthwhile articles are supplied our new Editor. Whether or not more than four issues will be published, therefore, depends upon the flow of material to Mr. Carter. The decision as to how many issues we shall have rests with you who are teachers and administrators in our field. You may submit articles to Mr. V. R. Carter, Editor-in-Chief, The International Journal for the Education of the Blind, Route No. 5, Muskogee, Oklahoma.

A Constitution was drawn up in 1951 to serve as a guide for the management of *The Journal's* affairs. Although this Constitution served well during the early days of the magazine's publication, it is now out-of-date and in need of revision. As your President, I recommend that the Constitution be studied carefully in the light of *The Journal's* present operations, so that it may be modified and rewritten in order to meet operating conditions as they exist today.

You will note on the cover of this issue that *The Journal* is "A Magazine for Teachers and Parents of Visually Handicapped Children." As the one magazine devoted specifically to an exchange of ideas relating to the educating of blind boys and girls, it should receive the wholehearted support of teachers of blind children everywhere. You can strengthen the magazine if you will not only subscribe to it yourself, but also if you will urge your fellow-teachers and parents of your students to subscribe to it, too.

In addition to teachers and parents of blind children, the magazine should prove of interest to those who work with blind adults, to librarians, and to city, county and state directors of special education. Please encourage these people in your own area to subscribe to *The Journal.* The cost to subscribers is only $2.00 a year. Subscriptions may be sent directly to Miss Marjorie S. Hooper, Managing Editor, The International Journal for the Education of the Blind, 1839 Frankfort Avenue, Louisville 6, Kentucky.

Au Revoir

By Paul J. Langan, Editor (Resigned)

The job of being a "departing" anything is not one to be envied in any sense of the word. To be "Departing Editor" of *The Journal* is even less appealing as an excuse for a shot at the printed page. Taking off on a new assignment does not mean to me

that I have departed by any means, and I hope that I shall be around for many years yet to see the continued growth of our professional magazine in the field of the education of blind children. I hope, too, that I may from time to time be able to break into the good graces of the new Editor with some copy on educational programs in the Far East which may be of interest to the teachers and schools in this country—at least your new Editor has most kindly qualified me as a Foreign Correspondent for *The Journal.* In any event, let us not look upon this piece as the end of a most pleasant two years' association with *The Journal.*

Since 1954, when *The Journal* was moved to Louisville, it has been a real experience for me to be the Editor of our professional magazine. I hope that during this period we were able to improve *The Journal* and add to its prestige and growth. It may be another six or eight years before the real impact of *The Journal's* contribution is recognized throughout the field of special education. I do feel, however, that in this short time, one definite achievement can be acknowledged. Schools, classes, teachers, and parents are now aware of the need for such a specific informational medium in our educational program. I think, too, that the AAIB has realized the potential of such a supplement to the broad field of work in which we all are engaged and interested.

If I must make some sort of farewell statement, I would like to think of it as perhaps a challenge to the new editorial board to continue the service *The Journal* has been offering the parents and teachers of our blind children. No better means is available to the field for presenting a factual story of the educational opportunities and advantages for blind youngsters today.

From Our Incoming Editor

By V. R. Carter, Editor-in-Chief

The new editorial staff of *The International Journal for the Education of the Blind* willingly and gladly assumes the responsibility for the publication of your professional magazine. However, the future of *The Journal*, in reality, is in the hands of its readers. It belongs to those whom it serves.

Those who live and work in intimate association with the diversified problems of educating children who are blind must share their professional experiences if our field of endeavor is to benefit and expand its services. It is through such interchange of information that many may profit quickly by the effort of only one person. Your *Journal* serves as a common outlet for professional articles of general interest. Therefore, we of the editorial staff solicit your assistance in keeping *The Journal* a magazine contributory to the best interests of our field, as well as a magazine of current news significance.

Expanded Provisions Under The Federal Act "To Promote The Education Of The Blind"

By Finis E. Davis, Superintendent

American Printing House for the Blind

On August 2, 1956, the President of the United States approved a Congressional amendment to the Act of 1879 "To Promote the Education of the Blind," whereby the educational books and aids provided through Federal appropriation to the American Printing House for the Blind, Louisville, Kentucky, may be supplied to all blind pupils in the United States, its territories and possessions, wherever they may be in attendance in a public educational institution of less than college level. Additionally, the new legislation increased the authorized ceiling of appropriation to $410,000 annually.

In amending the Federal Act, Congress provided that:

1. Each public institution for the education of the blind, as heretofore, would continue to receive, on requisition by its superintendent, its proportionate share of books and materials, based on its school enrollment.

2. Each chief state school officer, upon requisition, would receive the proportionate share of books and materials for all those blind children throughout his state attending public educational institutions, other than those in attendance at the public educational institution(s) for the blind, if any, which register their blind pupils with the Printing House.

For the purposes of the Act:

a. An "institution for the education of the blind" is any institution which provides education exclusively for the blind, or exclusively for the blind and other handicapped children (in which case special classes are provided for the blind). Under this category are included: the residential schools for the blind; adult rehabilitation centers for the blind conducting formal training courses; schools for the deaf providing special departments for the deaf-blind; and schools for the feeble-minded and mentally retarded, and other like public institutions for the handicapped, which conduct formally organized training programs for the blind.

b. The "chief state school officer of a state" is the superintendent of public elementary and secondary education in such state, or, if there is none, such other official as the Governor certifies to have comparable responsibility in the state. Beginning July 1, 1957, the chief state school officers will have sole responsibility for registering and serving the needs of all blind children throughout the United States and its territories and possessions, etc., who are not in attendance in institutions for the education of the blind as listed in (a) above. The roster of children so served by the chief state school officers will include, not only the blind children in attendance at public day school classes for the blind, but also all blind children attending regular public schools for the sighted which do not conduct specialized classes for the blind.

c. A blind pupil is a blind individual pursuing a course of study in an institution of less than college grade.

d. A pupil is considered blind if his vision comes within the following definition of blindness:

> "Central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with correcting glasses, or a peripheral field so contracted that the widest diameter of such field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees."

e. Pupils to be registered for the benefits under the Act must be enrolled and under instruction in a public educational institution on the first Monday in January of each year, as a basis for computing the per capita rate for allocation of the funds for the fiscal year beginning the following July 1st. Thus, the total registration submitted by both the "institutions for the education of the blind" and the "chief state school officers" on January 7, 1957, will be divided into the total appropriation provided by Congress for the fiscal year July 1, 1956—June 30, 1958, thereby determining the per capita rate for allocation purposes. Each institution for the education of the blind and each state school officer will receive as credit on the books of the Printing House next July 1st their proportionate amount of funds as computed by multiplying the per capita rate by the total number of pupils registered with the Printing House on January 7, 1957, and this credit will constitute their "quota allocation" for the ensuing 1957-1958 fiscal year. (For the current 1956-1957 fiscal year, the per capita rate is approximately $30, but it is hoped that Congress will increase this rate appreciably for the new year starting July 1, 1957).

f. Books and tangible apparatus will be furnished on quota allocation only on requisition by the superintendent of the schools for the blind and the chief state school officers.

g. All materials supplied to the educational institutions for the blind and the chief state school officers, through the Federal appropriation, must be "manufactured at" the American Printing House for the Blind.

The establishment of adequate facilities, and the implementation of proper procedures in the state departments of education, in order to take advantage of the new benefits under the Act "To Promote the Education of the Blind," will require a concerted effort on the part of everyone concerned during the next several months, so that as many as possible of the blind children not now being served through the facilities of the Printing House may be registered through their state departments of education (or such agencies as the state departments may delegate to take this responsibility in their name), and begin to receive the books and materials for their educational use as Congress envisaged in authorizing the amending legislation. Complete information has already been forwarded to the chief state school officers of the forty-eight states, the territories, possessions, and military protectorates of the United States, apprising them of the new provisions of the Act and outlining their new responsibilities thereunder. Additionally, the public school classes for the blind have been advised that they should notify their state departments of education concerning the blind children they have under instruction for registration purposes. It will, of course, be the responsibility of the state departments of education to locate all other blind children in their individual states, and to set up the proper machinery at the state level for administrative responsibilities with regard to the Act. Proper forms for registering blind pupils will be sent out, to both the schools for the blind and the chief state school officers, right after the first of the year. These forms will require information as to the name, school grade, and school systems in which each child is enrolled.

Remedial Program Reminders

By Samuel C. Ashcroft, Director of Educational Research

American Printing House for the Blind

The necessity of some type of remedial program in reading and other subjects is much more prevalent than we would like it to be. Certainly, the case as presented in *Why Johnny Can't Read* is overdrawn. Many have exposed author Flesch as capitalizing on inaccuracies in his analysis of the problem, and as advocating an extreme position with respect to the "cure" of all our reading problems. However, it is important to face up to the necessity of remedial measures and to make proper provision for them.

The pendulum swing of educational theory and practice is evident in the philosophy underlying practices in remediation. We have vacillated between the extreme of intensive, separated, formalized remedial programs and the extreme of no program of remediation outside that which can be accomplished by the teacher in the classroom. This article is not a brief for either extreme nor even for some middle-of-the-road plan. It is an attempt to point up some well-known and accepted principles that can be applied to programs wherever they might be on the continuum of the pendulum swing. Many of the principles are perhaps just plain common sense. Others are more soundly based upon educational and psychological research.

Let us consider some points worth remembering in connection with the administration and implementation of programs of remediation.

ORGANIZATION

Fundamental to an organized and systematic remedial program is diagnosis. Medical doctors and automechanics, psychiatrists and electricians, veterinarians and TV repairmen concern themselves first with diagnosis. Whether they are professionally trained, talented, skilled, or even just fly-by-nighters, all resort to more or less scientific methods of diagnosis. They hypothesize — they test hypotheses — they reject, revise, or confirm hypotheses to make diagnoses. None but fools proceed solely "by guess and by gosh" and without tools. The "hunch-masters" succeed for just awhile.

Remediation of educational problems, no less than those of any other skill or profession, requires careful diagnosis as a first step. Sound diagnosis necessitates some careful hypothesizing and a bag of tools; not hunches and a bag of tricks. Most educational tools of the type referred to are tests. Such tests are formalized behavior-sampling devices. So, to diagnose problems we must take carefully chosen samples of problem behavior, analyze them with care, and plan remediation on the basis of results. Other tools are rating scales, check lists, and less formal observations of samples of behavior. As is true in any diagnosis, the more samples of behavior available for analysis, the better the chances for accurate diagnosis.

In the field of the education of blind children, we are woefully handicapped by the dearth of test materials and diagnostic tools by comparison with our colleagues who deal with sighted children. One such notable lack in our battery of achievement and diagnostic devices is of an arithmetic computational achievement or diagnostic test. The reason for the omission of this test from the Stanford Achievement Battery is the fact that the ink-print form cannot readily be adapted. Complicating factors are the variety of approaches used in

teaching arithmetic computation and the variety of mechanical devices used. Perhaps the way to approach this problem is to give concerted attention to the development of a more standardized basic curriculum in arithmetic.

Nevertheless, our lacks do not excuse us from utilizing what we do have and developing or adapting additional tools. On the brighter side, we have to our advantage better pupil-teacher ratios, closer, longer, and more individual relationships with our children — providing better opportunity for sound diagnoses.

WHO SHOULD BE IN A REMEDIAL PROGRAM?

There seems to be confusion as to who is and who is not eligible for remedial treatment. We should have some objective criteria and objective evidence for classifying children with problems as to their amenability to and prognosis for remediation.

First is needed some measure of the child's capacity to achieve. What should we be able to expect of the child? We know that chronological age is not a good index of ability or capacity — all our 12-year-olds are not capable of performing as seventh graders, and some 12-year-olds perform as eighth and ninth graders in reading, arithmetic, and other subjects.

One of the best indices of capacity or ability is mental age. We are fortunate in having some relatively good tools for assessing capacity through mental age in the Interim-Hayes Binet, the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (not a mental age scale, but the manual provides a conversion table) and the Wechsler Adult Scales. From these, we can get at least some estimates of capacity through approximations of mental age.

Taking again our 12-year-old, let us assume an I.Q. of 75. The mental age then is 75% of 12 years of chronological age (C.A.) or 9 years 0 months of mental age (M.A.). Let us assume that because of our promotional practices and our desire to keep this chronologically 12 year-old-child with those more nearly his social peers, we have this child assigned to a sixth grade. On standard achievement tests, we find this child performing as a fourth grader. Although we have the child placed (sixth grade) one year below where we might expect him to be (seventh grade) and even so find him performing two years below his grade placement, we find him achieving in accordance with our assessment of his capacity to achieve and he is *not* a candidate for a remedial program.

Let us take another example. John is C.A. 10. His I.Q. is 120. His M.A. is 12 years 0 months. His grade placement is fifth grade. His achievement-grade grade level on standard tests is fourth grade. We should expect a child of mental age 12 to achieve at about the seventh grade level. The 3-year discrepancy between John's capacity to achieve and his measured achievement suggests that something is wrong and that he is a candidate for remedial help.

One more example will help us in our consideration of "who" for remedial programs. Tom is C.A. 12, I.Q. 83, M.A. 10-0, and achieving at the third grade or about 8-year-old level. The two-year discrepancy between our index of capacity to achieve (M.A.-10) and our measure of achievement (third grade or achievement age 8 years) suggests the appropriateness of planning remedial measures even though I.Q. 83 is considered "low-average" or "dull-normal."

These examples are presented to illustrate a way of selecting candidates for remedial programs. The method involves obtaining measures of capacity (M.A. is suggested), and comparing them with measures of achievement on standard tests. When discrepancies of about two or more years are found (taking into account many, many other factors, of course), a remedia-

tion program seems to be indicated.

We must hasten to point out that this is not a scheme rigidly to be followed. Our measures at best are rather crude. A host of other factors should be considered. The virtue of the scheme is its provision of a basis from which to work.

Another aspect of organization of the remedial program is a starting place for remedial work. We often seem to forget that children with problems requiring remediation have already been exposed to the regular programs in their class or grade. In our remedial programs, we often try larger or more intensive doses of the same treatment. Or, we try the same approach — merely changing the setting, the personnel, or the pupil-teacher-ratio. Instead, something different would seem more appropriate in remediation.

Research in learning theory has suggested that an efficient learning sequence follows a pattern of wholes — to parts — to wholes — organization. It is best when trying to learn something to get an overview of a whole unit, then to break it down into parts, and finally to synthesize it again into the whole. It has been said that a good teaching or lecture technique is — "Tell them what you're going to tell them (whole) — then tell them (parts) — then tell them what you told them (whole)." Applying this "learning theory" to remediation, we might take an example from reading instruction. There is quite general agreement that reading should begin with whole words with little attention to letters, syllables, phonics — a basic "sight vocabulary" approach or a "look and say" method; then to deal with word parts where necessary; then to deal again with wholes. But, children in need of remediation have failed somewhere in this sequence. First, we need to find out where, and remedy the weakness. It might be necessary to work with vowel and consonant sounds, with phonics, with syllabication, with sound-blending techniques. The point is that, for some reason, the regular program has not worked and that the remedial program should probably concern itself with a different attack on the problem rather than on more intensive work with the approach that failed.

SYSTEMATIZE

Surely no one "order of business" is best for all remediation. There is, however, need for some system.

There is the matter of systematizing the material-to-be-learned. Learning theorists have pointed out that material learned later can interfere with what has been previously learned (retroactive inhibition). To put it another way, after something has been learned, if something similar is learned close in time to the original learning and between the occasion for recall of the earlier learning — that learned between times may interfere or inhibit the recall of the previously learned material. Planning and systematization can minimize this possibility.

Systematization involves more than the "order of presentation" or order of business. One of the "rules for genius" is to "reduce routine duties to slavish habit so as to leave time for more important things." This maxim well applies to the selection of content, the aims of remedial program, and desirability of systematizing remediation.

It is to be remembered, too, that we find security in system and the prognosis for remediation is much enhanced when the child-with-a-problem is secure.

READINESS

It should be remembered that readiness is a product of many factors. There are the matters of general intelligence, physical maturation, perceptual development, experiential background, emotional and social maturity, and the development of attitudes.

Speech correctionists often report amazing percentages of successful remediation. Consumers of such success stories some-

times fail to realize that maturation and normal growth and socialization patterns almost automatically eradicate certain speech problems. When the organism has achieved appropriate levels of development — when the optimum time has come, (readiness), some behavior changes seem to occur almost magically. We know, of course, there is no magic in the process and that covertly the necessary "drill" and preparation have preceded the burgeoning development. Other remedial programs, too, can capitalize on these "normal growth processes" and seize "teachable moments" if we are skilled and astute enough to capture them.

When applying our thinking about readiness to problems of remediation, it is well to consider that perhaps one or more "teachable moments" in the problem area have passed, else it would not exist. We must consider then whether we can develop new "teachable moments." Few compensations to teachers can compare with the reward the "Aha!" or "Eureka" response brings in a student. Remember having gone over a point with a student for hours, days, months — trying every approach you can — and suddenly there comes the — "Oh, I see it now!" or "I've got it!"? Finally, readiness and receptivity were present and the learning seemed "to come in a flash."

Trying different approaches, providing enriching and supplementary experiences, utilizing several sense modalities, varying types of exercises, providing meaningful drill settings, may help us develop a "teachable moment." (This does not mean, however, that we can "hot-house" a child into a stage of readiness nor create it artificially.) Remember that readiness can operate in favor of remediation and that such "teachable moments" should be sought intensively.

MOTIVATION

Knowledge of progress toward a personally desired goal is a motivating factor, acts as a reward, and becomes a further motivation. One of the best kinds of motivation is the individual's recognition of his own success. The old saying has truth in it — "Nothing succeeds like success." The remedial teacher should find many ways to point up, to dramatize, and to capitalize on the students' successes. It is to be remembered that different people perceive different things as success. Certainly failures can be a type of success. Young children at times find failing to meet socially accepted criteria of conduct rewarding because it gets them attention they have been unable to get in any other way. A young child of the writer's acquaintance can clamor at length for her parents' attention in perfectly acceptable ways but at inopportune times for the parents. When her patience becomes exhausted, resorting to baby-talk to express the same pleas get immediate attention, even though it includes reprimands. The point is that important as is knowledge of success, it must be obtained in reasonably socially approved ways or the students become further set apart as a problem.

There has been much criticism of "external" rewards in the form of prizes, medals, marks, money, or privileges. The question involved is not whether or not the reward is internal or external but rather whether it is logically related to the behavior that elicits it.

One way to insure the positive values of knowledge of success is to start remediation at levels where students' foundations insure the probability of success.

MEANINGFUL REMEDIAL MATERIALS

Much has been written, pro and con, about transfer of training. The foundations of transfer and formal discipline were shaken half a century ago by the work of Thorndike. Exercising the mind as a muscle on difficult materials gives no assurance that the mind can comprehend other types of material when they are pre-

sented. Without arguing the value of Latin, we no longer teach Latin grammar for the purpose of teaching English — we teach English. Just so with remedial work — we work with the problem to be remedied — not something else in the hope of transfer.

Drill materials have often been derided, and perhaps rightly so. Meaningless, monotonous, repetitious drill is deadly. However, better defined "drill" is essential. A baby in learning to walk falls down and gets up thousands of times — not all at the same time, in the same way, in the same place, with the same results. The downs and ups occur in a thousand "contexts" — on beds, floors, rugs, cement, linoleum, grass, daddy's knees — in going to sister, eluding mother, grasping at daddy, climbing the footstool, stair, sofa, rocker, etc. Drill on a vowel sound should be like this too. When it occurs in a multitude and variety of contexts it does not have the meaninglessness, monotony, or deadly repetitiousness the critics of drill rightly decry. Subtracting money, chairs, children, blocks, absentees — dividing as subtraction — borrowing dimes to take away nickels — using abacuses, peg boards, game scores, calendar dates — such "contexts" for drill enhance its effectiveness and reduce its tedium. If this seems to imply transfer, the values of which are questioned above, it does. But this transfer involves easily discernable "common elements" and our faith is not shaken in the transfer of similar, common, or identical elements in simple situations.

RETENTION

Many factors influence the permanence of learning. How long ready recall will last is related to how well what is to be remembered is learned. Insuring longevity of learning is related to "overlearning." Learning rate in simple learning experiments is measured by the number of repetitions taken to reach a criterion of recall. If it takes ten "runs" to learn a limerick so that it can be recalled perfectly a maximum 24 hours later, "overlearning" may insure such recall for lengthier periods.

Meaningfulness of the material to be learned has an important bearing on retention. Here again, as with knowledge of success, meaning must be defined in terms of the learners' concept of it. The child who learned the Pledge of Allegiance in twelve trials but said, "I pledge a legion . . .," had found a meaning that facilitated learning. The value of the learning was vitiated, however, by the failure to insure the appropriateness of the meaning.

WHEN TO STOP

Basic to any philosophy underlying remedial programs should be the fact that the purpose is to return the child to the regular program better able to handle his own problems. Permanent assignment to remedial programs is a contradiction to the name and philosophy of the program. Either the name of the program or the objectives should be changed.

It would appear that when too elaborate and extensive a remedial program seems continually necessary, some curricular, methodological, or personnel evaluation is needed. One suspects that where no remedial program is felt to be needed, we are burying our heads in the sand regarding the outcomes of our instructional programs.

This article has been concerned with an attempt to stimulate thinking with respect to remedial programs. They should result from and be characterized by organization. The candidates for remediation should be chosen on the basis of objective criteria and evidence. Other factors to be considered are systematization, attention to readiness factors, provision for maturation, the use of meaningful materials, concern with the permanence of learnings, and when to stop remediation.

The "Halifax Method" Of Arithmetical Calculations

By S. R. Hussey, D.CnL., Principal Emeritus
and
Lowell Legge, M. A., Principal
Halifax School for the Blind

The methods of mental calculation described below have been employed by teachers at the Halifax School for the Blind for a number of years, with results which would seem to justify passing them along for consideration of mathematics' instructors in other schools. The writers have attempted to describe the various steps in some detail, and hope that in so doing they will not incur the accusation of verbosity.

We begin with a simple example of addition. To add 3849 and 4563, the pupil proceeds as follows: to the former number he adds first four thousand, followed by five hundred, then sixty, and finally three. Thus, in his mind the answer evolves: 3,849, 7,849, 8,349, 8,409, 3,412. Instead of four individual operations, we teach with the idea of one complete thought: "3,849—8,412." Our operations in addition, subtraction, and multiplication are done from the left instead of from the right. We concentrate on this method during the entire period of training.

Why have we abandoned the old and well-trodden paths for this newer method? The answer lies in the fact that the sightless individual must in post-school life rely on mental calculation, for his only practical implement is the braillewriter, and it is frequently not at hand.

To make this method of mental arithmetic clear, it is necessary to start at the very beginning. In the earliest classes the child should learn to count from one to ten, and continue this counting both forward and backward, until there is a clear mental picture of the relation of these numbers to one another. A number such as 7, whether written or spoken, means nothing to a child when isolated. It only assumes meaning when it can be placed in its proper position in relation to the other numbers. Once this mental picture is clear, the primary facts of addition and subtraction become easy.

Once the secondary facts are learned, we continue to build up applying these directly to multiples of ten. Columns of figures such as the following are added:

1	10	100	1,000	10,000
2	20	200	2,000	20,000
3	30	300	3,000	30,000
4	40	400	4,000	40,000
5	50	500	5,000	50,000

Each of these columns is added, from the top, for all numbers are added to the first one given, as indicated above. In handling the first column, a child would think: 1, 3, 6, 10, 15. The child is then asked to subtract the numbers from his total of 15, again starting from the top. As he proceeds downward the remainders will be 14, 12, 9, 5, 0. Each of the columns is treated in the same manner.

In this way, and without undue effort, the child becomes familiar with the various powers of ten. He is also on his way to a clear conception of the place values of the digits in a number, which is an essential basis for more difficult work. To be sure that the pupil understands what he is doing, the teacher may question as follows:

15 tens equal?
20 tens equal?
31 tens equal?
And the reverse:

370 equal _____ tens
410 equal _____ tens
130 equal _____ tens

This exercise is continued until the responses are instantaneous. The importance of this exercise cannot be emphasized too strongly.

Another exercise which at this point is found to be most effective is to take a digit such as 7, and continue to add another digit, say 4, to the limit of about 50, thus 7, 11, 15, 19, etc. Then subtract the same number from the total 51, 47, 43, etc., back to 7. This can be used as oral recitation, or as desk work, while the teacher is otherwise occupied. It should be thus used in tens, hundreds, and thousands at the discretion of the teacher. We could then consider the addition of tens to any two-digit number, such as: 24 adding 30 continually to a given limit, and further expand to 240 adding 300. Finally we arrive at the addition of columns of any two-digit numbers, such as:

12
17
22
27
32

These are to be added as before, from the top. Here the student thinks 12, 29, 51, 78, 110, and then checks by subtraction from the top as follows: 110, 98, 81, etc. In both these columns of two-digit numbers the tens are dealt with first, or in effect, the numbers are added from the left instead of from the right. Thus: 12 plus 17 equals 12 plus 10 plus 7. If the child's basic work has been thoroughly done, the addition of the column above presents little difficulty. In checking, 110 — 12 is considered as 110 — 10 — 2 = 98. Note that the minuend is always kept intact.

The next step would of course be the addition of a zero, thus raising the numbers to hundreds, and the procedure would be the same.

SUBTRACTION

In considering this process beyond where we have treated it merely as a check on elementary addition, the first step to be emphasized is the subtraction of any number of two digits from 100, as for example: 43 from 100, 67 from 100, and so on. The method used is to subtract the number from the even tens immediately above it. In the case of 43 from 100, the 43 is taken from 50, leaving 7, and from 50 to 100 is 50. The remainder is then 7 and 50 or 57. 67 from 100 equals 3 plus 30, equals 33. If the child's foundation is good, such subtraction is done almost instantaneously.

The next step is to subtract any three-digit multiple of ten from the hundreds immediately above it, such as 320 from 400, 460 from 500, and 670 from 700. A unit digit is then added to the subtrahend—326 from 400, 467 from 500. One must remember to subtract from the even tens immediately above the subtrahend first of all, thus: 326 from 330 equals 4, 330 from 400 equals 70. Answer: 70 plus 4 equals 74.

We are now in a position to expand our minuend, first to any even hundred. Using our 326, let us subtract it from 600, 800, 900. Then let us add any number of tens to the minuend, (for example: 326 from 520), and finally let us add the unit digits such as 326 from 517. By the time this last stage is reached, the pupil should be able to take the 326 from 400, with no effort, and add this remainder of 74 to 117, which is the difference between 400 and 517 to it, thus getting the answer of 191. This method of subtraction might be called the money-changing method. The only time one would deviate from it

would be in subtracting our 326 from a number such as 445, where the 45 is larger than the 26. Here, the 26 is taken from 30, and the remainder, 4, added to 15, which is the difference between 30 and 45. The 19 thus obtained is added to the difference between the hundreds and gives the final answer of 119.

MULTIPLICATION

The student would first think, "There multiplication tables up to 12 × 20.

Step 1 — Multiply each of the following numbers by 6: 20, 40, 60, 90, 70, 50. The student would first think, "There are two tens in 20; 6 by two tens = 12 tens = 120." With a little practice, the student answers promptly 20 × 6 = 120; 40 × 6 = 240; 60 × 6 = 360; and so on.

Step 2 — Multiply each of the following numbers by 7: 800, 600, 700, 900. Here again, we should aim at prompt replies, 800 × 7 = 5,600, etc.

Step 3 — To multiply 87 by 9, the student goes through the steps: 87 × 9 = 720, + 63 = 783. He finally, with practice, reduces this to the one process 87 × 9 = 783.

Step 4 — To multiply 573 by 8, the stages are: 573 × 8 = 4,000, + 560 = 4,560, + 24 = 4,584. Again, with no more than a reasonable amount of drill, the student can apparently make the calculation in one "jump".

Step 5 (a) — Multiply 87 by 27: 87 × 9 × 3 (factoring the 27) = 783, × 3 = 2,100 + 240 + 9 = 2349.

(b) Where neither number is factorable: 43 × 23 = (43×20) + (43×3) = 860 + 129 = 989.

(c) 87 × 39 = 87 × 40 — 87 = 3,480 — 87 = 3,393.

Note that in (c) 39 is 1 less than 40; therefore we multiply by 40 and subtract 87.

SHORT CUTS: Most short cuts are derived from an algebraic formula. Take the formula $(x+7)(x+8)$ equals $x^2 + 15x + 56 = x(x+15)+56$.

Now if we replace x with 10, we have $17 \times 18 = 10(10+15)+56 = 10\ (25)+56 = 250+5 = 306$.

Rule: To multiply numbers in the tens, such as 15 by 17, add the unit figure of the second number to the first number, and call the results tens, then add the product of the units. $15 \times 17 = 22 \times 10 + (7 \times 5) = 220 + 35 = 255$.

When one of the numbers to be multiplied is in the twenties, we consider this as 10 plus the balance and proceed as above.

We do not find it practicable to carry out mental multiplication of this sort beyond the twenties.

In dealing with young students we do not attempt to explain the formula, but simply give the rule for rapid calculation.

THE ONE-LINE METHOD OF MULTIPLICATION

To multiply 456 by 873:

456
378

398,088

Here the multiplier is reversed, the unit figure 3 comes under the unit figure 6 and the tens figure 7 to the right of the units figure, and the hundreds to the right of that. The product 3 × 6 equals 18 units, 8 under 3 in the product. If we now imagine the multiplier to move one space to the left, the 3 units comes under the 5 tens, and the 7 tens under the 6 units in this fashion:

456
378

By multiplying each digit by the digit above it, the products 15 and 42 with the one to carry makes 58 tens. Then put the 8 in the product to the left of the 8 already there with 5 to carry. Imagine the

multiplier again to move one space to the left, so that 3 units come under 4 hundreds, 7 tens under 5 tens and 8 hundreds under 6 units. The three products 12, 35, 48, are all hundreds with 500 to carry equals 100 hundreds. Place 0 in the product and carry 10. The next imaginary move brings 7 tens under 4 hundreds and 8 hundreds under 5 tens. The products of multiplying each figure by the one above it are 24 and 40 with the 10 carried make 78 thousands. 8 goes in the product and 7 is carried. In the final move 8 hundreds comes under 4 hundreds. The product 32 with the 7 gives 39 tens of thousands. Place 39 in the product, and the complete product is as shown above, 398,088.

The reason for reversing the multiplier as shown is that the parallel motions in finding the products is less confusing to the child than the crisscross motion if it were not reversed.

In multiplying 1,414 by .82, we omit the decimal point and remember to place it after the fifth figure from the right in the product.

1414
28

1.15948

DIVISION

The first steps in division are taken in the usual manner, that is, the division of one-, two- and three-digit numbers by 2, 3, 4, etc. The work is done orally until the teacher is satisfied that the child has mastered the mechanics of this and keeps his place values straight. Thus: 78 divided by 2, 2 in 7, 3 and 1 over, answer 30, 2 into 18, 9, answer 39. Similarly with a three-digit number 554 divided by 2, the first 2 in the answer is 200, the 7 is tens and the last 7 units. Since the child is working mentally, the oral recitation and mental concept of results is important, for they are the substitute for what the normal child does with the pencil. Practice and confidence result in surprising skill and speed in dividing five- or six-digit numbers by any number up to 12.

In dividing by any two-digit number than can be factored, we can divide by the factor or by the number directly. Where the number itself is used it is set down thus: 28(9,688). It is recorded this way

346

to avoid awkward spacing for the student on the braillewriter. The method used in doing the question is the same as in ordinary short division.

If 55,854 were to be divided by 36, the 36 would be factored into 12 and 3. The quotient when divided by 12 is 4654 and a remainder of 6. Then 4654 divided by 3 equals 1,551 and a remainder of one. Since this second remainder is a multiple of 12, the total remainder is 1 × 12 plus 6 or 18/36 equals ½.

In dividing by a three-digit number such as 241, it is recommended that only the remainder be shown each time, and the quotient be shown in a vertical column to the right, thus avoiding the necessity of rolling the paper back to a quotient line. Thus:

241)	773,548	3
	505	2
	2348	0
	174	9
Quotient	3,209	176

241

Check, place the remainder above the quotient and reverse the divisor, making it a multiplier

179
3209
142

773,548

To repeat briefly the one line multiplication: Since 1 unit is under 9 units, 1 multiplied by 9 plus 9 from the remainder equals 18 units, record the 8 and carry 1.

Now our multiplier is moved one place to the left, so that the 1 units come under 0 tens, and the 4 tens come under the 9 units. Our total number of tens equal 1 multiplied by 0 plus 4 multiplied by 9 plus 7 from the remainder and the 1 we carried, equals 44. 4 is recorded to the left of the 8, because it is tens, and carry 4. The next move brings the 1 unit under the 2 hundreds, etc. When the elementary multiplication and addition is complete, the total is 25, which is hundreds. The 5 is recorded in its proper place to the left of the 4 in our answer. The product after the next move is 13, and after the fifth move, the total of the products is 17, and the final one is 7, thus the check is complete.

In addition to the complete one-line method of multiplication, there is also, in fact, a one-line method of division. Dividing by 99 is perhaps the simplest example of this method. Since 99 is one less than 100, we use 100 as a trial divisor. We note that 100 will go into 773 seven times with a remainder of 73. 99 will also go 7 times with a remainder of 73 plus 7, since 7 multiplied by 99 is 7 less than 7 multiplied by 100. Care has to be exercised if we are dividing 895 by 99. It obviously goes 8 times with a remainder of 95 plus 8, which is sufficient to make it 9 times with a remainder of 4.

Try dividing 773,548 by 99. Regard the 99 as 100 minus 1. Check your answer as indicated above by one-line multiplication. Since the answer is $7813\frac{61}{99}$, to check set it down

$$\begin{array}{r} 61 \\ 7813 \\ 99 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

100 as a trial divisor is used for numbers between 95 and 105. Dividing by 103 for instance, is regarded as 100 plus 3. Any even hundreds or tens is used in similar manner for dividing by numbers, whether for units above or below such number. For example, 69 is regarded as 70 minus 1, 52 is 50 plus 2, 123 as 120 plus 3.

This method of teaching arithmetic will at first appear confusing and complicated, but if taught from the beginning it is effective. Perhaps the greatest tribute to the system is that rarely in our school does a child dislike arithmetic or, in the higher grades, algebra or geometry, and rarely is it dropped by those who complete their high school course.

Scouting For The Blind

By Hugh D. Johnson
Institutional Representative, Troop 710
Maryland School for the Blind

Troop 710, of the Maryland School for the Blind, was host for the 1956 Jamboree for the Blind Boy Scouts in the Eastern States. This year's Jamboree was held at the Timonium Fairgrounds, Baltimore County, Maryland, on October 18-20, 1956.

Preparations for this event were started by the Scoutmaster of Troop 710, Lewis C. (Tiny) Brandt, in the spring of this year. Six of the dozen invited troops agreed to participate in the Jamboree.

Original plans called for the Jamboree to be held at Broad Creek Camp, but the Baltimore Area Scout Council requested the committee to hold it in connection with the Scout Exposition that was to be held for the scouts of the Baltimore Area

at the Timonium Fairgrounds. The Baltimore Area Council agreed to furnish the necessary tents, cots, mess tables, cooking equipment, dishes, and refrigerators. The Council also provided cooks to handle the cooking and judges to judge the events.

The troops participating were from the following schools: Oak Hill School in Connecticut, Overbrook and Western Pennsylvania Schools in Pennsylvania, Perkins in Massachusetts, the Virginia School, and the Maryland School. All of the troops arrived at the fairgrounds in time for the Friday evening meal. The boys enjoyed an evening of making and renewing friendships, while the leaders made final plans for the following days' events. Some of the boys and leaders visited the hundreds of booths and demonstrations exhibited by the troops of the Baltimore Area in the exhibition hall at the fairgrounds.

Troop 710 exhibited the special tools, devices and equipment used by the blind in woodwork, electronics and basketry. Almost every phase of scouting was shown at this exposition by every rank of scout from Cub Scout to Sea Scout and Air Scout.

On Saturday morning the troops participating in the Jamboree presented projects in scouting. The Virginia boys constructed a ten-foot tower of logs and rope, and the troop from Overbrook set up a complete camp for one Boy Scout. The Maryland participants exhibited the use of the Morse Code in scouting, while various parts of first aid were shown by the boys from Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Western Pennsylvania.

On the afternoon of the 20th, the troops gathered for competition, and the point system of scoring was used. In this the boys of one troop are in competition with time and skill instead of being in direct competition with other troops. In all events except first aid, sixty points were awarded if the project was completed in a set period of time, and forty points if the event was completed in the second period of time. Twenty-five points were awarded to any troop for participation. Up to one hundred points were awarded in first aid. The events entered were fire-building, tent-pitching, knot-tieing, first aid, and the use of the knife and axe.

Maryland and Western Pennsylvania received first place, with Overbrook, Virginia, Connecticut and Massachusetts tied for second place.

On Saturday night the boys gathered around the campfire for songs, skits, stories, and food. Early Sunday morning the troops began to leave for their various schools after a happy and successful Jamboree.

The leaders hope to have the public realize that blind scouts can do many of the things that sighted scouts can accomplish. It may be necessary to make certain adaptations, but our Jamborees have shown the Baltimore Area Council that it is possible to turn out scouts in our schools for the blind who can, and do, compete successfully with sighted boys.

Troop 710 has for the past three years taken top honors among the Baltimore Scouts in the Veterans Day Parade that is held every November in Parkville, Maryland. These boys have competed in this parade as a regular scout troop and not as a group of blind boys.

It is true that whatever a blind Boy Scout does in scouting he must do better than the sighted boy if his work is to be recognized. The Scout Leaders want our boys to advance in scouting because they do the necessary work to pass their tests, with sympathy left out of the picture.

It is the hope of the leaders of all the troops entered in this year's Jamboree, and of the leaders of some of the troops unable to participate this year, that these Jamborees be made an annual affair, and that they be nationally recognized.

Appointments

Mr. Edward W. Reay has been appointed Superintendent of the Idaho School for the Deaf and the Blind, at Gooding. Mr. Reay, a native of Illinois, is a graduate of Illinois College, at Jacksonville, Illinois, in 1937. He took specialized training in the teaching of the deaf at the Clarke School for the Deaf, in Northampton, Massachusetts, in 1938, and received a Master of Science Degree in Education from the University of Massachusetts, in 1939. Prior to the war, he taught in the State Schools for the Deaf in Council Bluffs, Iowa and Rochester, New York.

Following the war, Mr. Reay taught at the Illinois School for the Deaf, in Jacksonville, Illinois, and later obtained a Master of Arts Degree in Special Education at Gallaudet College. Since that time he has served as Principal in the Washington and Florida Schools for the Deaf.

Mr. Reay assumed the duties of Superintendent of the Idaho School for the Deaf and Blind in May of 1956. We welcome Mr. Reay to this closer relationship with the education of the blind.

* * * *

Mr. Everett E. Wilcox has been appointed Superintendent of the Oregon State School for the Blind, at Salem, Oregon.

Mr. Wilcox received his Bachelor's Degree from Willamette University, and his Master's Degree from the University of Oregon. Mr. Wilcox has been engaged in graduate work for a further advanced degree.

Mr. Wilcox served as Principal of the Oregon School from 1949 until his current appointment. Prior to that he had been Dean of Boys and an Instructor at the School.

During the war years, and thereafter, Mr. Wilcox served with the Navy in medical research, as a communications officer, and as a training officer in the Veterans Administration, serving seriously disabled veterans, including blinded veterans.

Among important contributions to the field of education of the blind Mr. Wilcox served as a member of the Committee of the United States Office of Education studying Competencies Needed by Teachers of Children who are Blind.

Mr. Wilcox is a member of the AAIB, ICEC, Phi Delta Kappa, and Tau Kappa Alpha. He is also interested in and active in such civic groups as Toastmasters, the Y. M. C. A., and the Methodist Church. Mr. Wilcox is married to a former teacher of the Oregon School, and has a twelve-year-old son. He is a native of Wyoming, but has been a resident of Oregon for the last thirty years.

The appointment of Mr. Wilcox insures the continuation of the outstanding program that has been developed for the education of blind children in the state of Oregon.

Increased Membership Dues For AAIB

At the Worthington, Ohio, Convention last June, the American Association of Instructors of the Blind amended Section 6 of the Association By-laws, thereby increasing membership dues from $3.00 to $4.00 per year. The amended section now reads:

"The expenses of the Association shall be provided by annual dues of four dollars ($4.00) for each member. Corporate memberships among the schools shall be based upon the total enrollment of each school reported for the next preceding year to the American Printing House for the Blind. The Board of Directors will determine the rate of assessment. Each individual paying the annual dues of four dollars will receive a subscription to *The International Journal.*"

Square Dancing In A School For The Blind

By Myra F. Morgan, Teacher
New York State School for the Blind

For physical fitness, for mental alertness, and just for fun, try square dancing. Educators agree that dancing is wholesome recreation for public school boys and girls; surely, it is beneficial to our students who have somewhat less opportunity for physical activity than their sighted brothers and sisters. Two or three hours of square dancing give exercise and fun as well as experience in listening and in following directions.

To promote dancing in our school there is a club directed by two faculty sponsors. No one joins the club who is not interested in this activity. Although we started our organization with high school students only, we now accept youngsters in seventh grade and above.

We started with four boys and four teachers, three of whom were experienced square dancers. Since these teachers understood and explained the calls to the others, they deserve much credit for introducing square dancing to our school. As soon as the boys felt reasonably independent, they invited their girls, and before the end of that year another set was added to the progressing little enterprise. We now average four sets a year.

We realized immediately that teaching square dancing to the blind would not be easy, but we soon learned a few simple, little tricks, which have aided us greatly. Perhaps the most difficult call to master is "grand right and left". If we find any girl who does not get the idea, we ask the other girls to step out while she goes around the set of boys by herself. In a smaller group there is less confusion, which makes it easier to teach her this call. We may do the same for a boy by asking the other boys to step out while he goes around the set of girls. When we give a new figure, we ask each couple to walk through it instead of the head couple only, as is usually done in a sighted group. It is extremely difficult to teach a couple of beginners to swing properly; therefore, we find it easiest to teach a beginner the proper method of swinging by allowing him to practice with another club member who has already learned the proper method.

Although a little sight helps greatly in square dancing, it is certainly not necessary. Some of our better dancers are entirely without sight. The children like simple, familiar dances, and it takes some persuasion to stop their fun long enough to teach them a new dance once in awhile.

Our club was formed in 1949. For the first five years, we danced almost exclusively to records. We used a machine with variable speed control in order that we might slow the records down while teaching the dances, and later increase the speed. Early in 1954 an experienced teacher and caller became interested in our students and came to help with the club. By that time we felt that we were good enough dancers to go to a public high school to dance to the music of a live band. Last winter we attended several such dances. Now a few public school students come to our dances, too. At a public dance our students learn little techniques that we are unable to get across to them in their small group.

Some of our students have bought records and taught their families and neighbors to dance. There may be a reason for their interest — after a few such lessons they all go out dancing to-

gether. They have found one more activity in common with the seeing world.

That a real interest is shown in our club and that our students receive much social gain from square dancing can best be shown, I think, by this quotation of one of our graduates, Donald Rutschmann:

"Some people find the rhythm of a mambo very difficult, but here is a dance anyone can do. When someone square dances, he seems to follow a rhythmic pattern through every number, even if it is a simple act of 'walking his honey back home' in a short promenade. And with this rhythm comes a spirit of fun — a type of fun that makes one laugh at other people's mistakes and at his own, too, without hurting anyone's feelings, because no one cares. Half the time no one is sure who made the mistake anyway.

"Unbelievable as it may seem, this type of physical recreation, so necessary after a humdrum day of sitting in a schoolroom, can be of great value for mental relaxation as well. It takes the kinks out of a fellow and makes him loosen up and let himself go for a little while. When a person is thinking of the music, the rhythm, and the calls, there is no time for concentrating on the problems of the day. The dance is more interesting anyway.

"Most important of all, however, are the social contacts that can be made during square dancing. Of course, it is true that there is little time for talking during an actual square dance, but a wise philosopher once said that actions speak louder than words, and after having square danced, I am sure he was correct."

Anyone who likes square dancing will doubtless agree with Donald, and he may also be able to give other reasons for his enjoyment of this form of entertainment.

Square dancing, which was warmly received by the students at its very introduction, has been for several years the most popular form of recreation in this school, and it has given our students hours of enjoyment and relaxation as well as many interesting and profitable social contacts which have enabled them to become more active, not only in this school, but in the public high schools of this area as well. What further evidence need be given that square dancing is a valuable, enjoyable hobby for the blind?

A Slick Trick In Woodworking

By Charles C. Woodcock, Instructor
Oregon State School for the Blind

Woodworking and furniture making for blind youngsters as well as the adult blind involves many problems. Perhaps the greatest problem comes in applying the finish. If a person can afford it he can order projects pre-cut and they need only be assembled and finished. Inexpensive furniture of every description is available in an unfinished state—ready-sanded and of good quality. In a manual training class for elementary or junior high age pupils, students can use various devices and aides to cut their own materials and receive a great deal of satisfaction from doing it themselves. Of course there are many problems involved in these aspects of construction, yet most students feel that painting and varnishing, or whatever type of standard finish is selected, offers the greatest problem.

For these reasons we have used a rather easy way of finishing work that the students can do with a minimum amount of help or in most cases with none at all. It consists of using a filler, followed by heavy waxing. In most cases the filler has been paint of a selected color and shade. For example a driftwood finish can be had by

painting a completed project, such as a lamp, with gray paint, immediately wiping it off and rubbing it until it is dry enough to handle without getting paint on the hands. If the article is large, so that there is danger of the paint drying too much, it will be necessary to do it in sections. A blond finish is the result if a white paint is applied and removed until only the softer grains retain the desired tint. Yellow gives a nice decorative touch to a toy or play object, as does red or blue. The pastel colors work out nicely, and for brighter objects a darker color is necessary. In applying this filler coat, if a blind youngster misses a spot or two he will usually cover it when he begins to wipe off the excess.

In some cases wax can be applied immediately after the paint is removed. It is better, however, to wait until the next day because the wax will take up some of the paint and cover some of the contrasting grains that give beauty to the object. It is important to use a good grade of wax and preferably a carnouba wax. This is the best available wax and is made from the leaves of a tree native to South America. Manual training instructors can mix their own waxes, but this hardly seems necessary with the great variety of good paste waxes available in every grocery store. A good waxing will give a soft eggshell gloss.

This is not a new idea and is not a craftman's finish. It is durable and lasting, easy to re-wax when needed and, if watermarked, it can easily be restored by rubbing with a soft cloth. Objects that will have to be exposed to excessive heat should not be finished this way because wax is not heat resistant.

If the student is not capable of handling the various materials necessary for a good varnish or lacquer finish, or cannot afford them, and this finish is an acceptable one for this project, lots of articles will become 100% the work of the students in spite of the visual handicap.

Book Review

THE STORY OF BLINDNESS by Gabriel Farrell. Publisher: Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1956. 270 pages. $4.50. Reviewed by Samuel C. Ashcroft.

The author states in the preface his purpose in writing THE STORY OF BLINDNESS as being". . . to tell those . . . (the sighted) . . . that they have a responsibility for . . . (the blind)." The opening line of Chapter One reads "Blindness is becoming a social problem sharply impinging on the conscience of the world." Dr. Farrell cites the need for ". . . clarification of many aspects of blindness and the determination of the measure of society's responsibility for . . . (the blind). In brief, it may be said that Dr. Farrell has taken for his purpose in his book stimulating the further development of a social conscience on the part of the sighted toward the blind. The goal of this growing social conscience is to be "parity." This parity, Dr. Farrell says, is being sought by the blind "with some support by the seeing" through Federal aid as ". . . specific compensation for the loss of sight" (p. 169) — as ". . . a handicap allowance that gives to blind people a fairer chance to compete with the seeing." (p. 170).

The book is a revision and amplification of eight lectures in the John Lowell, Jr. Lecture Series given at Boston University during November, 1953. The factor of a 55-minute time limit on these lectures may be responsible for the uniform brevity (average length, 13 pages)of seventeen of the eighteen chapters (Chapter 14, 23 pages) of the book. The greater length of Chapter 14, "The Toll of War," is justified since it deals with what is perhaps today's most crucial argument for increased sensitivity in society's conscience toward the blind.

Dr. Farrell retired as director of Perkins School in 1951. He was but the fifth director of that school, the history of which at the time of his retirement spanned almost 120 years. Being basically comprised of lectures delivered only two years after his retirement, the book seems largely written from the perspective of a still active leader in the affairs of the blind. Yet, at times, there is an objectivity and scope in the work that suggests the different perspective that might be expected to accompany retirement.

Dr. Farrell writes fluently. Only occasionally does his Dartmouth background, his Episcopal Theological Schooling, his ministerial and chaplaincy background show through in the style. The text shows few vestiges of Dr. Farrell's journalistic background except possibly in chapter titles. Although the ministerial background does not seem to be evident in the style, it does seem to influence the choice of theme and content. Here is a man we usually think of as an educator appealing to society's conscience rather than to its mind. Perhaps there is a philosophical question here into which this reviewer should not venture. Nevertheless, it is a question about which it is interesting to conjecture.

Dr. Farrell seems unduly modest regarding his own role in the story of blindness. Certainly in his long association with Perkins during crucial years he has had an impact on "the story." Such activities in which he played an important part are the Perkins post-graduate courses, the teacher-training program, the deaf-blind program, and the World Conference. Perhaps the title should be understood to imply "*A* Story of Blindness," or perhaps it might have been titled on the order of another recent publication in our field, "As *I See* It."

Of most interest to educators will be the specific references to education. Dr. Farrell points out that ". . . the earliest constructive work among the blind began with children." After recounting some history and bibliographical sketches of pioneers in education, Dr. Farrell deals in one chapter with "The Way Ahead." Herein, some readers may be surprised at the liberal point of view taken by a "residential" school man toward the future of education of the blind. He warns leaders of the residential schools about ". . . raising the visual acuity limit . . . and lowering the age for admission." He says, ". . . the present tendency to accept partially seeing children in residential schools for the blind is a questionable practice from the point of view of modern education, even if they are provided with sight-saving books, and equipment from other sources." About preschool age children he says, "To admit such children to residential schools is to run counter to the experience of the past in the field of education of the blind and to the modern concept of child welfare. All thoughtful people accept the principle that the proper place for the young child is in the home, and experience has shown that the warmth of family care even in a poor home is often better than the best institutional care."

Dr. Farrell says, "Another aspect of change that is decidedly encouraging and has potential value is the interest now found among parents of visually handicapped children . . . One of the most powerful and promising forces in the field of the blind today is the spontaneous growth of organized groups of parents of blind children. Perhaps the future plans for the education of blind youth will depend not on the discussions or deliberations of educators in either camp [residential or day school] but rather on the determination of parents whose children are the factors of ultimate concern."

It is hoped that this will not be the last book from the pen of Dr. Farrell. It would seem that a book specifically aimed at the audience of "professional" educators and students of the education of the blind and based on the length and breadth of Dr.

Farrell's experience in our field might be very stimulating for professional growth and development.

The Harvard University Press has published Dr. Farrell's work in an admirable format. It is a neat little book, complete with annotated references and an adequate index.

The President's Corner

By Dr. H. Thompson, President

American Association of Instructors of the Blind

It has become obvious that the organizational and financial structure of the AAIB must be extended if the Association is to satisfy the mounting requests for professional services. Anticipating the need to begin to focalize thought in this direction prior to the meetings of the Board of Directors of the American Associaton of Instructors of the Blind in Louisville the last of October, First Vice-President Overbeay and I "took to the road" and sought possibilities. Bold and challenging steps seemed necessary in the eyes of leaders in our field with whom we had contact. Plans which began to take shape were presented to our Board in Louisville. The Board of Directors gave general approval of these plans which, of necessity, must be fluid in the developmental stages. I am happy to report in the following paragraphs actions which were taken during the Louisville meetings.

The Board voted to hold the 1958 Convention of the AAIB in the State of Washington. It was the opinion of the Board that we had an obligation to the membership in the far west to take the 1958 Convention to their area. The present Board is in no position to make commitments beyond the Washington Convention, but we did express the hope that the attractive invitation from Tennessee for 1958 can be kept warm for 1960. Start saving and planning now for transportation pools and hospitality across the country. Group travel can be done economically and the Northwest is beautiful country. LET'S GO WEST IN '58!

Your Secretary and President obtained legal advice and made application for the AAIB to become incorporated in the State of Kentucky. Unless there are unforeseen difficulties, the AAIB will be a Kentucky corporation by the time this information reaches you. This step was authorized by the Board which passed the necessary resolutions in Louisville.

Your President appointed a committee within the Board composed of the President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President and Secretary-Treasurer to act in a manner similar to an executive committee. The Association is unable to finance meetings of the full Board as often as such meetings should be held, yet details of running the AAIB are becoming too numerous and vital to be left in the hands of the President alone. This committee represents approximately six administrative years. It will serve as a long-range planning committee, authorized by the Board to act within general limitations set by the full Board. It is authorized to take advantage of any opportunity within these limitations which will hurry our plans toward realization.

We have taken a new look at our financial needs for the next ten years. If we are going to render the professional services our twenty-seven workshop groups have requested, the minimum budget for the next ten years will be $360,000. The

Association already has within its means the raising of approximately $140,000 in a ten-year period. The tentative ten-year proposed budget includes funds for summer institutes and workshops. It includes funds to pay for the *International Journal* or some other magazine to be published by the AAIB alone or jointly with others. It includes funds for other printing and publications. Provision is made for a full-time secretary and permanent office.

The long-range planning committee will be called to meet with several groups in New York shortly to make plans for a finance committee and to seek support from a foundation for the development of professional training programs. Under whatever auspices such a program might be operated, it is the desire of the American Association of Instructors of the Blind to be more effective in its participation. The earlier visit of your President and First Vice-President to New York leads us to believe that we have good chances of success in both areas, finance and professional development.

We believe we are moving in the direction the majority of our members wish us to go. We will not be fully successful in all our efforts. However, any progress we make will be gain. You can help by actively selling memberships and *Journal* subscriptions. Also, give us the benefit of your constructive criticisms.

DATES TO REMEMBER

1957

February	9—North Central Association of Schools for the Blind Wrestling Tournament, Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School, Vinton, Iowa.
February	14-16—Regional Conference on Language Arts, Perkins School for the Blind, Watertown, Massachusetts.
February	15—Choral Festival of New York Institute for the Education of the Blind in conjunction with private schools for the sighted in New York City (participating schools: Brearley, Chapin, Collegiate and Trinity), New York Institute for the Education of the Blind, New York, New York.
February	16—Southwestern Association of Schools for the Blind Wrestling Tournament, Oklahoma School for the Blind, Muskogee, Oklahoma.
March	1-2—Eastern Athletic Association of Schools for the Blind Wrestling Tournament, Maryland School for the Blind, Overlea, Maryland.
March	29-31—Music Festival of Schools for the Blind, Eastern Division, New York Institute for the Education of the Blind, New York, New York.
April	12—125th Anniversary Program, New York Institute for the Education of the Blind, New York, New York.
April	23-27—ICEC National Convention, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.
July	7-12—AAWB 31st Convention, Chicago, Illinois.
August	2-10—International Conference of Educators of Blind Youth, Oslo, Norway.

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